



**STATEMENT BY HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS AND PROMOTION FORUM TO THE  
AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS ON THE VIOLATION  
OF THE RIGHTS OF MARGINALISED PERSONS IN UGANDA INCLUDING LESBIANS,  
GAYS, BISEXUALS, TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX (LGBTI) PERSONS**

**Presented at the 67<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of The African Commission on Human and Peoples'  
Rights held in Rwanda.**

**13<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

Mr. Chairperson, Commissioners and all distinguished delegates and participants.

HRAPF would like to applaud the Commission for continuing to fight for human rights of all African People even amidst the pandemic.

HRAPF also acknowledges the support given, and crucial steps taken by state agencies like the Uganda Police Force and the Uganda Human Rights Commission to protect the rights of LGBTI persons in Uganda. However, we note that there has been an increase in acts of violence perpetrated against people due to their real or perceived SOGIE.

In 2019, HRAPF together with six other organisations working on the issues pertaining to rights of LGBT people documented and verified a total of 282 violations that were committed against LGBT persons during 2019. Out of these, 236 were human rights violations arising out of 21 verified cases and committed by state actors. The remaining 46 violations were violations of human dignity committed by non-state actors. This was higher from 64 violations documented in 2018. The most common violations were violations of the right to liberty, the right to equality and freedom from discrimination, (with new trends of massive arrests).

HRAPF is also concerned about the continued arrest of people for offences related to the COVID-19 Regulations, which offences falls within 'petty offences.' This has led to over congestion of police cells and prisons in Uganda. Over 5000 people have been arrested under the COVID-19 restrictions since March 2020.

In addition, we note the increased brutality of police while conducting arrests and quashing assemblies of the opposition amidst the ongoing electoral campaigns. While we have witnessed undisrupted massive processions by political aspirants from the ruling party, we have seen the police strongly coming out to stop opposition aspirants from talking to their electorates under the guise of implementing COVID-19 regulations.

Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum therefore calls upon the African Commission to;

- a) Urge the Government of Uganda to fully protect ALL its citizens from violence and abuse by state agents and non-state actors by thoroughly investigating reported violations.
- b) Urge the Government of Uganda to take deliberate steps to implement African Commission Resolution 275, including positive legal reform, and continuously and effectively track progress of implementation of this resolution
- c) Urge the Government of Uganda to ensure that non-derogable, fundamental rights such the right to a fair hearing and the right to freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment are not indirectly suspended during the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- d) Urge the Government of Uganda to decriminalise and declassify Petty Offences as well s adopt alternative punishments to petty offenders and those who violate COVID-19 measures in order to decongest police cells and prisons and therefore reduce the risk of spreading COVID - 19 in detention places.
- e) Urge the Government of Uganda to retrain all Police Officers on Human rights observance and ingrain human rights in the training of new Police officers.
- f) Urge the government of Uganda and the Uganda Police Force to protect all political aspirants despite their political parties and ideology.

I thank you Mr. Chairperson